

# The President's Daily Brief

*April 28, 1975*

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April 28, 1975

Table of Contents

South Vietnam: The National Assembly has voted to turn the government over to General Duong Van "Big" Minh. (Page 1)

Jordan:

[Redacted Box]  
(Page 3)

25X1  
25X1

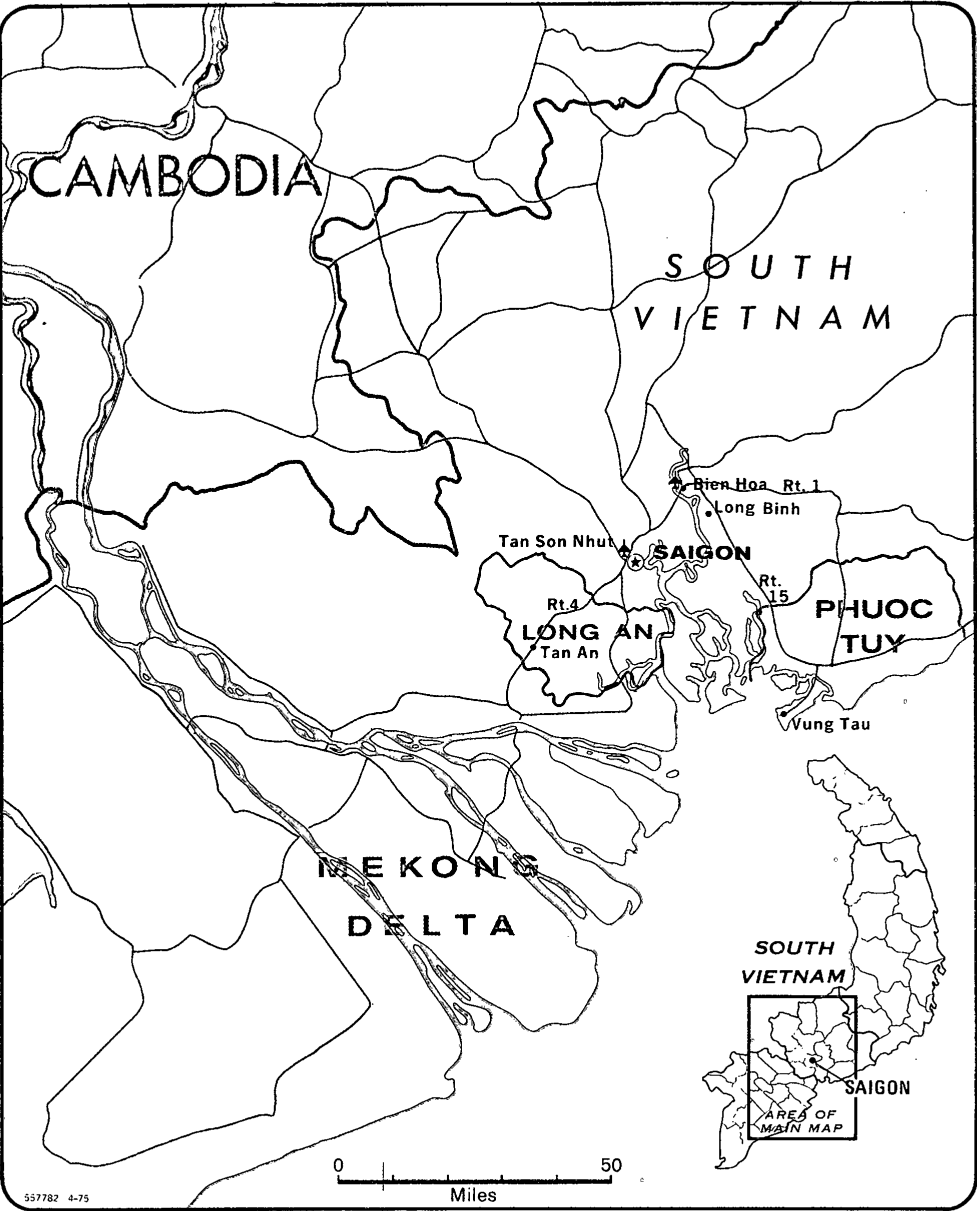
Portugal: The moderates, led by the Socialist Party, won a resounding victory over the Communists in the national constituent assembly election last Friday. (Page 5)

Cyprus: Negotiations will resume today in Vienna under the auspices of UN Secretary General Waldheim. (Page 7)

Thailand-Cambodia: Bangkok is looking to diplomacy to avert a potential threat to its border from the new Cambodian government. (Page 9)

Notes: Korea-China; China (Page 10)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

*The National Assembly voted unanimously yesterday to turn the government over to General Duong Van "Big" Minh. The final vote followed a sharp escalation of communist military pressure, including the first rocket attack on Saigon in almost three years--presumably a North Vietnamese signal that it wants to hear from the new government quickly.*

Minh is scheduled to be sworn in today. He reportedly plans to announce cabinet appointments today or tomorrow. His new government can do little more than arrange for surrender under the guise of a "political solution."

Initial communist reaction to his appointment has so far been a "no comment." A spokesman for the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government in Saigon, when questioned by the press Sunday, only said that the communists insisted on three basic conditions: the removal of Thieu and his "clique," the complete withdrawal of the US, and the "elimination of the war machine." This last demand, broadcast for the first time Saturday over the Viet Cong's Liberation Radio, appears to be a call on the new Minh government to make it an early order of business to call on South Vietnam's military establishment to "stack arms" and cease further resistance.

\* \* \*

The communists, meanwhile, are putting new pressure on Saigon's outer defenses, and the cities of Bien Hoa, Vung Tau, and Tan An may fall shortly. Northwest of Saigon, near the Cambodian border, Tay Ninh City came under attack last night by an estimated four communist regiments. The opening round of the new fighting began Saturday, when the North Vietnamese launched a series of strong attacks employing units from at least two divisions on Saigon's eastern front. These units cut Route 15 between the Vung Tau and Saigon and then moved north and south toward the two cities.

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Sunday's action began with a six-round rocket attack on Saigon. The North Vietnamese expanded their holdings southeast of the capital, overrunning the capital of Phuoc Tuy Province and pressing closer to the city of Vung Tau. They also closed in on the government's logistic base at Long Binh, pushed along the Route 1 corridor to within sight of Bien Hoa, and moved infantry and armor into attack positions just north of the Bien Hoa air base.

Communist military activity also increased southwest of Saigon along Route 4. A major communist attack yesterday cut the highway both north and south of the Long An Province capital of Tan An and forced the government defenders to retreat from a number of strongpoints. [redacted]

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[redacted] Tan An was to be attacked  
[redacted] and the city would fall at any time.

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These weekend gains tighten the communists' grip around Saigon. The port city of Vung Tau is cut off from Saigon and is under attack; the major link between Saigon and the delta is probably permanently cut. The communists have also set up advance artillery positions from which they can direct more accurate fire on Saigon, Tan Son Nhut air base, Saigon's river access to the sea, and all remaining important government holdings in the Saigon area.

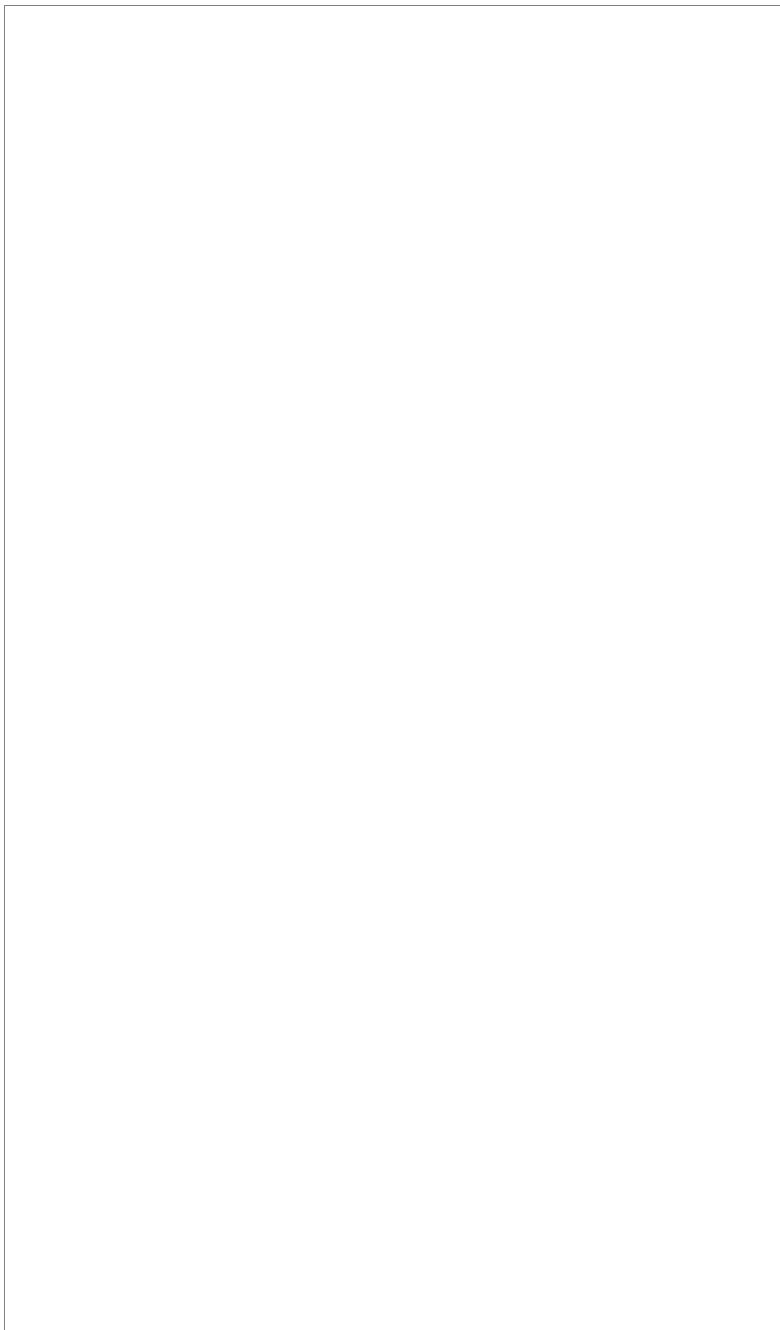
The headquarters of Military Region 3 at Bien Hoa [redacted] planned to pull out for Saigon this morning. The pressure on Bien Hoa has created some panic, and a number of government troops have been reported looting in Bien Hoa city. Communist activity along Route 1 on the outskirts of Saigon early this morning temporarily disrupted traffic between Bien Hoa and the capital.

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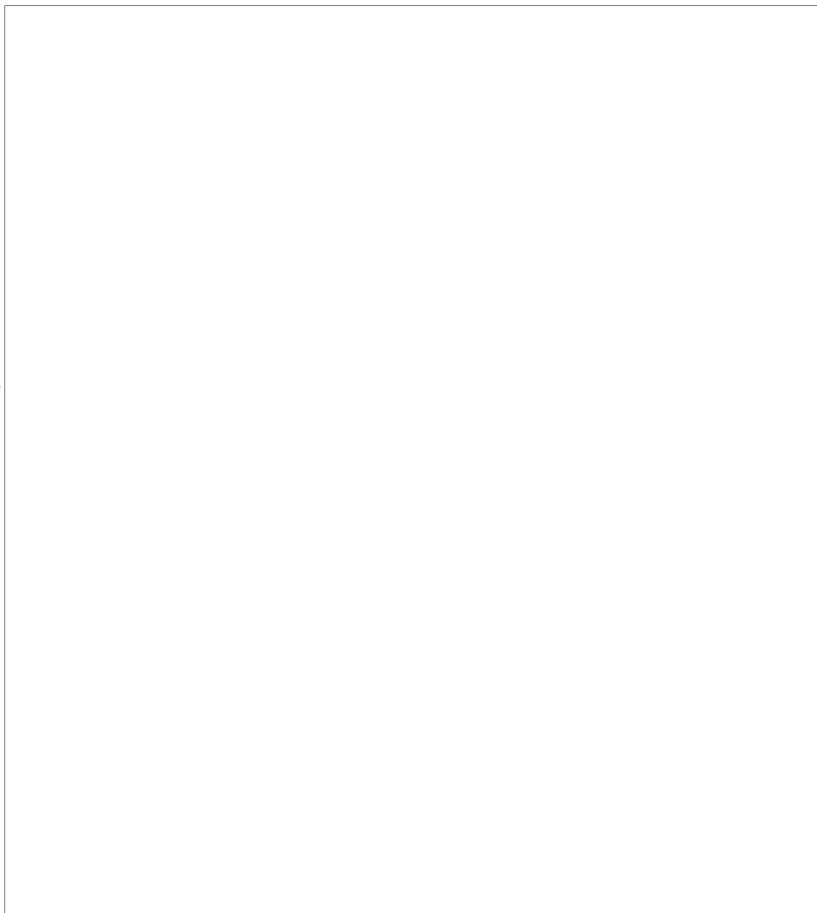
JORDAN



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## FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

## PORTUGAL

*Portuguese moderates, led by the Socialist Party, won a resounding victory over the Communists in the national constituent assembly election last Friday. The Socialists' tally exceeded the party's highest expectations; they showed remarkable strength in all areas of the country.*

Unofficial results gave the three moderate parties more than 70 percent of the vote: the Socialists received 38 percent, the center-left Popular Democrats 26 percent, and the moderate right-wing Social Democratic Center 8 percent. The Communists and their allies took a total of 20 percent, with 13 percent won by the Portuguese Communist Party. Over 90 percent of the registered voters turned out, most exercising the right to vote for the first time.

The Socialists' impressive showing will increase their political influence, even though leaders of the ruling Armed Forces Movement say the election was nothing more than a "pedagogical exercise." The terms of the constitution to be approved by the constituent assembly are a foregone conclusion, but that body's deliberations could have an impact on the policies of the military government. The Socialist are assured of over one third of the seats. Altogether, the moderate parties may control as much as 80 percent of the assembly.

The Socialists cannot exercise their status as the dominant civilian political force without the consent of the Armed Forces Movement. [redacted]

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[redacted] party chief Mario Soares is uncertain about how the Movement will react to the Socialist victory. He is trying to make it palatable to the Movement by describing it as a victory for "progressive" forces.

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Although press reports indicate that Soares may be interested in forming a common front with the Communists and the Popular Democrats, [redacted]

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[redacted] the party will make no formal alliances. Soares intends instead to emphasize the Socialists' independence and popular strength, and to build the party's support.

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Movement leaders are pleased that the election was peaceful and that it boosted Portugal's international image. So far, they have played down the moderates' victory and stressed the political naivete of the Portuguese people. A spokesman said the Movement interpreted the vote as a victory for the Movement because the Socialists and the other top vote-getters had previously agreed to its platform.

The election may hasten the growth of factionalism in the Revolutionary Council. [redacted] the division between moderate and radical factions that existed before the unsuccessful March 11 coup have become more complex.

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How the Movement reacts to the moderate victory will largely depend on which faction comes out on top. A moderate election victory was feared most by the radical officers. Prime Minister Goncalves may well suffer politically as the result of the vote; he made no secret of his support for the Communist-dominated Portuguese Democratic Movement.

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[redacted] President Costa Gomes is most likely pleased at the outcome, but he and the moderates still probably lack the power to turn the situation to their advantage.

The Communist Party and the Portuguese Democratic Movement stand to lose the most as a result of the election. After spending more money than anyone else and using their organization to get their supporters to the polls, they can hardly complain that the people were not aware of their program. The party will probably not protest the election, but will most likely complain that the "anticommunists" and "antidemocratic forces" sabotaged their campaign.

Communist leader Alvaro Cunhal summed up his party's approach by contending that its strength by far exceeds what is shown in the election figures. The Communists will encourage the Movement to belittle the election results; their success in the near future depends on their continued ability to influence the Movement leaders.

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### CYPRUS

*Greek and Turkish Cypriots will resume negotiations in Vienna today under the auspices of UN Secretary General Waldheim. There are indications that both sides may be more flexible than in previous rounds, but mutual suspicions and differences in approach could lead to more snags.*

Greek Cypriot negotiator Glafkos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot negotiator Rauf Denktash will try to reconcile their respective position papers, which they submitted just prior to the suspension of the talks in mid-February. The documents, which reflect the maximum demands of the two sides, have few points in common and agreement will be difficult.

The Greek Cypriot proposals call for the establishment of a multiregional federation with a strong central government. The more vaguely worded Turkish Cypriot proposals call for a biregional federation with a weak central government.

Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis and Clerides, however, seem prepared to accept a biregional solution, provided the Turks are willing to make substantial concessions in other areas. Karamanlis and Clerides appear to have persuaded President Makarios at least to consider such a solution.

So far, the new government in Ankara--as a result of prodding from Washington--appears willing to consider a limited withdrawal from the territory it controls on Cyprus. It has been reluctant to provide specific details, however, and has emphasized that no concessions will be made except in the course of negotiations.

An immediate impasse could arise in the talks if Denktash insists that Clerides accept the principle of a bizonal federation as a precondition to further discussions. It is almost certain that the Greek side would not commit itself in advance to a bizonal federation unless the Turkish side is willing to give some idea of the amount of territory it is prepared to give up and the number of refugees that would be permitted to return to their homes.

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Such an impasse might be avoided if the Greek side can be persuaded to give tacit acceptance to the idea of biregionalism in return for concrete proposals by the Turkish side on other issues. Even without a snag over this issue, however, the negotiations are expected to be long and arduous.

The Vienna sessions will last a week, after which the talks will likely be transferred to Nicosia. Ultimately, the final settlement is likely to be determined by direct negotiations between Ankara and Athens, possibly as part of a more general settlement of outstanding differences between the two countries.

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THAILAND-CAMBODIA

*Bangkok is looking to diplomacy to avert a potential threat to its border from the new Cambodian government.*

The Thai are clearly worried that their close association with the Lon Nol regime, in addition to their poor relations with Sihanouk during the 1960s, will prompt the new Cambodian government to take a hostile attitude toward Bangkok. The Thai [redacted]

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[redacted] are now fearful of Cambodian support for Thai insurgent bands operating near the Cambodian border. These groups have never presented a serious security problem to Thailand, but government officials in Bangkok are now concerned that an influx of Cambodian-provided arms and men could quickly heat up the situation.

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In order to avoid any trouble with Cambodia, the Thai [redacted] has decided to avoid contact with Cambodian dissident groups forming in Thailand; provide economic aid to the new Cambodian government; return refugees, with the exception of former high-ranking government officials, to Cambodia; and seek ways to get the US, the Soviet Union, and China to counter North Vietnamese domination of Cambodia. [redacted]

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NOTES

*South Korean President Pak Chong-hui' is contending that North Korean President Kim Il-song's visit to China indicates Peking's tacit support for North Korean military adventures against the South.*

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Pak's views on North Korean provocation have been provided to the Seoul press.

\* \* \*

*China has extended its first formal invitation to a US manufacturing group to visit Peking.*

Officials of the Electronic Industries Association have accepted and will go to Peking in late July. In the past, Chinese dealings with US manufacturers have been limited to individual firms. The decision to invite the electronics manufacturing group probably stems from Peking's need for large quantities of modern electronic and telecommunications equipment and its desire to sound out the US market potential for Chinese-manufactured components. The Chinese may also attempt to lobby the US delegation for liberalized export restrictions, as well as for most-favored-nation treatment.

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